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which it contains, but also for the light which it throws on the question of the origin of Mark 16:9-20. The explanation which has found most favor since Westcott and Hort is that the end of Mark, either never completed, or mutilated by accident, was replaced by verses borrowed from an unknown gospel. Not only do we know the names of such uncanonical gospels, but also an Armenian manuscript of the year 989 has these verses of Mark in regular position, but with the statement that they are "of the Elder Ariston." A certain Ariston lived in the first century and is mentioned by his follower Papias as a disciple of the Lord.

Among other passages of doubtful authority in the Gospels, the story of the woman taken in adultery, John 7:53-8:11, is omitted in MS III; so also Luke 6:5; 22:43, 44; 23:34; John 5:4, etc. On the other hand, the supposed liturgical ending of the Lord's prayer, Matt. 6:13, is found in this manuscript, as well as Luke 24:12; 24:40; Matt. 16:2, 3; also Luke 24:36, 37, changed and enlarged to read "It is I, be not afraid; peace be unto you."

Manuscript IV is a badly decayed fragment, now containing many short portions of the epistles of Paul. It is written on parchment in small uncials and probably belongs to the fifth century. From a couple of quire numbers preserved it is possible to determine that the manuscript originally contained Acts and practically all of the epistles, but not Revelation. My brief examination shows that the text was good and singularly free from interpolations. While no continuous portion of the text remains, many brief passages from Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, and Hebrews can be recovered.

HENRY A. SANDERS

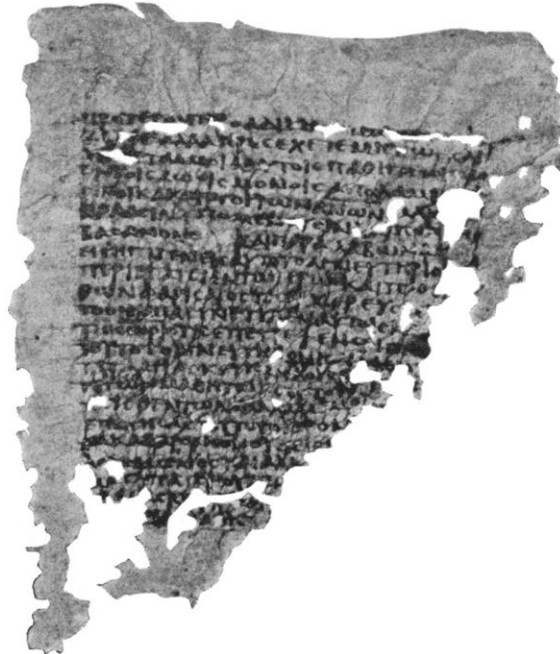
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[The *Biblical World* takes special pleasure in publishing the above description by Professor Sanders of the newly discovered Freer manuscripts. They are of great importance for the text criticism of the Bible. A paleographical and critical discussion of the ending of Mark's Gospel as here found will appear in the March number.—EDS.]

THE NEW GOSPEL FRAGMENT FROM OXYRHYNCHUS

In May of 1906, at a meeting of the Egypt Exploration Fund in London, Mr. Grenfell announced the discovery at Oxyrhynchus, in the preceding December, of a considerable fragment of an apocryphal gospel, which promised to be of much interest. It was further stated that the fragment dealt with a conversation between Jesus and a Jew on the subject of ceremonial purification, and concluded with a stern rebuke administered to the

Jew by Jesus. This announcement aroused wide interest and comment, but through the demands made upon the discoverers by other tasks, the text has remained unpublished until two years have elapsed since its discovery. With the appearance of the fifth Oxyrhynchus volume, in December last, the Greek text, with an introduction, translation, extended notes, and a facsimile, becomes fully accessible, and some proper estimate of its value is made possible.



THE OXYRHYNCHUS GOSPEL FRAGMENT, *verso*

The parchment—for it is upon a bit of parchment and not of papyrus that the text is preserved—is a diminutive piece, measuring barely three by three and a half inches, and belonging, according to its editors, pretty certainly to the fourth century, but possibly to the fifth. It is a leaf out of a book, and is thus inscribed on both sides. Moreover, the irregular uncial hand in which it is written is so small and crowded that the two columns of writing, though measuring only about two inches each way contained in all 45 lines amounting to more than 200 words. There is some punctuation and abbreviation, and even an accent or two. For the date of the manuscript we are dependent on the hand in which it is written, and it is upon this paleographical evidence that Messrs. Grenfell and Hunt

refer it to the fourth century. The text is translated by its discoverers and editors as follows:

. . . before he does wrong makes all manner of subtle excuse. But give heed lest ye also suffer the same things as they; for the evildoers among men receive their reward not among the living only, but also await punishment and much torment.

And he took them and brought them into the very place of purification (ἀγρευτήριον), and was walking in the temple. And a certain Pharisee, a chief priest, whose name was Levi, met them and said to the Savior, Who gave thee leave to walk in this place of purification and to see these holy vessels, when thou hast not washed nor yet have thy disciples bathed their feet? But defiled thou hast walked in this temple, which is a pure place, wherein no other man walks except he has washed himself and changed his garments, neither does he venture to see these holy vessels. And the Savior straightway stood still with his disciples, and answered him, Art thou then, being here in the temple, clean? He saith unto him, I am clean; for I washed in the Pool of David, and having descended by one staircase I ascended by another, and I put on white and clean garments, and then I came and looked upon these holy vessels. The Savior answered and said unto him, Woe ye blind, who see not. Thou hast washed in these running waters wherein dogs and swine have been cast night and day, and hast cleansed and wiped the outside skin which also the harlots and flute-girls anoint and wash and wipe and beautify for the lust of men, but within they are full of scorpions and all wickedness. But I and my disciples, who thou sayest have not bathed, have been dipped in the waters of eternal life which come from . . . But woe unto the . . .

For a full discussion of this curious passage the reader is referred to Oxyrhynchus Papyri, Part V, or to the separate pamphlet in which the editors issue it. Some points at once suggest themselves. First, as found in Upper Egypt, we should expect this fragment to belong to one of the gospels known to have been current there in the earliest centuries, that according to the Hebrews, that according to the Egyptians, or that according to Peter. In these, however, at least as far as they are known to us, Jesus is usually referred to not as the Savior, as he is in this new fragment, but as the Lord. The editors of the text are influenced by this consideration to refer the fragment to no one of these, but to some other gospel of the second century, unknown to us.

Irenaeus taxes a Valentinian, Ptolemaeus, with always calling Jesus the Savior, and a connection with the *Gospel of Valentinus* suggests itself. The text exhibits no heretical bias, however, and thus probably belonged to an orthodox gospel. Orthodox gospels were rarely written in Egypt, or elsewhere, after the middle of the second century, so that our new gospel probably dates from a time not much, if at all, later. Further, the references to the topography of the temple, the sacred vessels, the pool of David

with its staircases, and the manner of purification, all betray what seems to be ignorance of real conditions at Jerusalem, and thus seriously prejudice the historical character of the incident related, and of the whole document to which it belongs. This tends to show that this gospel is not one of the early or Palestinian accounts of the life of Jesus, and, quite independently of its orthodox or heretical character, pushes its date well down toward the middle of the second century. It is worth notice, however, that this gospel deals with the ministry of Jesus, and emphasizes his teaching, instead of concerning itself with legends about his childhood, as later gospel writers were fond of doing. The writer is under no misapprehension as to the essential thought of Jesus, however fallible he may appear to be in matters of detail, for he sets forth Jesus' teaching as to the worth of inward purity in contrast with ceremonial purification, in a way thoroughly consonant with the best evangelic tradition. On the whole, the episode seems to be a later elaboration in a somewhat rhetorical spirit, of teachings found in Matt. 15:1-20, and Mark 7:1-23.

Of kindred gospels known to us by name at least, that according to the Egyptians comes to our minds, as a possible source of this fugitive leaf. Certainly there are greater difficulties in connecting it with the *Gospel of Peter* than with that gospel. But its well-known encratite tendency is not apparent here, and we must remember that there were many uncanonical gospels current in Egypt as late as the time of Origen, as he states in the first of his homilies on Luke. Moreover, of the uncanonical gospel fragments thus far found in Egypt, the most, we have to admit, defy identification with any of the gospels known to have circulated there. We are thus compelled anew to the conviction that in the second and third centuries, and even in the fourth, when this one was copied, gospels were numerous and various in Egypt and presumably elsewhere as well, though probably to a less extent in metropolitan than in rural communities.

If we were quite certain that Valentinus wrote a gospel, it might be appealed to, for Jesus is regularly called Savior in our fragment, after the Valentinian manner, and the middle of the second century, A. D. 135-160, was just the time of Valentinus' activity. But a connection with the much-discussed Gospel according to the Hebrews¹ presents much more probability. It is true Jesus is not, in the fragments of that work that have reached us, usually called the Savior; the Lord is the prevailing designation for him. Yet on one occasion Origen, in discussing John 2:6, mentions "the Gospel according to the Hebrews, where the Savior says, Just now my mother the Holy Spirit took me by one of my

¹ Proposed by the late Professor Blass: cf. Leipoldt, *Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons*, Vol. I, p. 278.

hairs, and bore me away to the great mountain Tabor." He does not indeed say that the gospel in question called Jesus the Savior, but his use of that title just here may fairly suggest that. Still it must not be forgotten that Origen not infrequently calls Jesus the Savior. But Jerome too, the two of his three quotations² of this saying, refers it to "the Savior"—*Salvator*—in all three cases citing the Gospel according to the Hebrews as its source. We must not be too sure therefore that Jesus was not called the Savior to that gospel. The form of the new episode, so suggestive of expansion from a canonical kernel, is much like the incident of the Rich Inquirer recited by Origen, in discussing Matt. 15:14, from the Gospel according to the Hebrews. Most of all, the vocabulary of our fragment recalls the language of another fragment from the same gospel, which is preserved in one of the Greek fragments of Eusebius' *Theophany*, and in which "harlots and flute-girls," *πόρναι καὶ αὐλητρίδες*, are mentioned together, as here. If this new episode can claim a place in the Gospel according to the Hebrews, the historical value of late so widely claimed for that gospel largely disappears. At all events, some connection with it is highly probable.

The "Place of Purification," *ἀγνευτήριον*, is a difficult and novel expression, which can only refer to the Court of Israel, as that part of the temple precinct was open only to male Israelites who were ceremonially clean. That such a washing and reclothing as the Pharisee Levi had performed was needful before entering it, there is no evidence to show. The "Pool of David," too, is otherwise unknown. Yet it is perhaps of significance that the Pool of Siloam lay close by the City of David, strictly so called, and was sometimes called the King's Pool, as in Neh. 2:14, whence it may sometimes have been called, properly or not, the Pool of David. Certainly persons washed there in Jesus' day (John 9:7, 11), but hardly Pharisees of high-priestly rank, we should suppose. The defiling of the pool by dogs and swine, however, suggests to the editors of the fragment the stagnant ponds about Egyptian villages. It is on the whole probable that real and imaginary touches are mingled in the fragment's allusions, and that it is the work of one writing in a place remote from Jerusalem, who seeks to amplify and elaborate elements derived from authentic gospel tradition.

In view of such discoveries in the field of early Christian literature, the work of the Graeco-Roman Branch should no longer be permitted to languish, as it now does, for want of funds. It is manifestly most important that enough subscriptions to this work be at once made to enable the Fund, through Messrs. Grenfell and Hunt, to resume excavations in Egypt this year.

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² Jerome on Micah 7:7, Ezek. 16:13 (*Salvator*); on Isa. 40:9 (*Dominus*).